

I am committed to the health and wellbeing of our veterans. If you are a veteran encountering issues with your military benefits, an existing VA claim, awards and commendations earned but not received, or other service or separation related issues, my Rochester staff may be able to help you.

For general information about veteran's issues, visit the Department of Veteran's Affairs [website](#).

To request a copy of your military records, you should fill out the form SF-180. This form can be downloaded by clicking [here](#). If you have completed the SF-180 and have not received a timely response, our office can check on the status of your request.

Information about the new 21st Century GI Bill can be found [here](#).

The following are examples of assistance I've provided to southern Minnesota veterans:

“Thank you. With you it is not just what you say but what you do. As a Vietnam veteran, my husband’s service to his country had finally been recognized and rewarded.” – Gerry Penrose, wife of Chief Warrant Officer Richard Penrose, Retired.

It just wasn’t right that after serving in Vietnam and suffering the effects of PTSD and Agent Orange, Chief Warrant Officer Richard Penrose (Retired) should have to fight to receive the service related disability and VA benefits to which he was entitled. My office worked with the VA to get Mr. Penrose’s disability increased to 100%. I also corrected a problem Penrose had with receiving his previous benefits retroactively. Now Richard and his wife Gerry are receiving the full disability and concurrent military pension.

Private Jay Haugesag, a Vietnam Veteran from Mankato, had a disability claim pending with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Mr. Haugesag was experiencing financial hardship as a result of not receiving payment for this claim. My staff and I were able to help expedite his disability claim with the VA and Mr. Haugesag was mailed a check for the \$34,000 of payments that were owed to him by the VA.

Private First Class David Mahlke III, of Winona, was injured in the line of duty during the initial invasion of Iraq in March 2003. After returning home to Winona, David discovered that his discharge papers did not reflect his service in Iraq and had not been awarded any of the medals he had earned for his service. These errors prevented David from obtaining or displaying the Minnesota State Iraq War Veteran license plates that he wanted for his pickup truck. My office contacted the Army and asked them to correct David's discharge papers. The Army corrected its mistake, added David's service in Iraq to his discharge papers and awarded David the medals he had earned in service to his country. David now proudly displays his Iraq War Veteran license plates. I presented David with his medals in May 2007.



Congressman Walz and David Manike pose with his new license plate.